

*The Hills and Mountains laid low, and
JEHOVAH alone exalted, in the Salvation
of ISRAEL.*

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S E R M O N,

Preached at SEVEN-OAKS, in KENT,

DECEMBER the 4th, 1785;

And at TUNBRIDGE, Dec. the 11th.

By MICHAEL BLIGH.

Buy the Truth, and sell it not. PROV. xxiii. 23.

*Grace be with all them that love our LORD JESUS CHRIST
in Sincerity. EPH. vi. 24.*

L O N D O N

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the ensuing discourse has not the least hope of pleasing the generality of professors in the present day; much less, of gaining their esteem and applause. His desire and principal design in this publication are, to bear a testimony for God, respecting the precious truths contained in it; of which, through rich grace, he has been made to know, in some degree, the *power* and *sweetness*; and which, by the help of God, he has preached for more than thirty years.

It is with pain he reflects, that the truths contained in the following pages, are too little esteemed by some professors in the present day; and, by others, deserted and opposed. And even among those who profess to believe them, is it not to be feared, that there are but *few*, comparatively, who see their *vast importance* in the gospel system, in real christian experience? This *indifference* to divine truths, called by the specious names of *candour*, *charity*, and so on, has, doubtless, been one cause of that *contempt* in which those are held, who strictly adhere to them; if not of the loss of vital godliness in some

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churches,

churches, and in many christians. This *base indifference* to divine truth has too often led the way to it's being delivered up into the hands of it's enemies.

If what is attempted in the following pages should, through a divine blessing, have the least tendency to heighten divine truth in the esteem of any of God's dear children; to endear the Lord Jesus Christ to them; and to build them up in faith and evangelical holiness; I shall think myself abundantly recompensed for my poor labours, and hope to be enabled to give all the glory to God.

JER. iii. 23.

Truly, in vain is Salvation hoped for from the Hills, and from the multitude of Mountains: truly in the LORD our GOD is the Salvation of Israel.

THESE words are expressive of the disposition and conduct of penitent backsliders; of such as are made sensible of the evil nature of sin; that are truly humbled for it before an holy, and sin-hating God; and, under the influence of divine grace, are made willing, heartily willing, to forsake their sins, and to be saved in the Lord's own way; that is, by the Lord Jesus Christ, and by him only. In the preceding verse, these penitents are invited to return to the Lord their God: *Return*, says the Lord, *ye back sliding children*: which invitation being set home to their souls, they readily answer, *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

Happy they, who are thus recovered from their manifold backslidings, and brought home, as true penitents, to the Lord their God!

The great subject of my text, is *salvation*; the salvation of the soul. This, my friends, is what

6 *The Hills and Mountains laid low,*

what we all stand in need of; and what each of us should earnestly seek after, in God's own appointed way. Our text informs us, that it is not to be *hoped for from the HILLS and MOUNTAINS*: and then it assures us, that *in the LORD our GOD is the salvation of Israel.*

We may therefore enquire,

I. *What HILLS and MOUNTAINS those are to which all merely natural men are prone to look, and from which to expect salvation. And then,*

II. *Shew, that spiritual and eternal salvation is to be hoped for and found, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him only. And, while the subject is under discussion, may the eternal Spirit open our hearts to receive the truth, and lead us, as sensible sinners, to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.*

I. Then, we shall enquire, *What hills and mountains those are, to which all merely natural men are prone to look, and from which to expect salvation.*

There is, doubtless, in the words of my text, an allusion to those hills and mountains, on which the Jews set up and worshipped idols; from which false gods they expected salvation from their temporal enemies. Nay, some of them perhaps might be so stupid, as to expect eternal salvation from those dumb idols. Instances of which might be easily given, from the holy scriptures,

But, if we view this chapter as a prophecy referring to gospel times (as part of it most certainly does) and take the words in a *metaphorical* sense, then, by these *hills* and *mountains*, we may understand things that appear GREAT, and HIGH, in the view and esteem of mere natural men, and graceless professors; and on which they place some hope and confidence for eternal salvation. And

(1) A *religious education* is a great thing with many persons, on which, they place some hope of salvation. It is, doubtless, an happiness to enjoy a truly religious education. Such of you, my young friends, who have been thus favoured, have great reason to admire the conduct of Divine Providence towards you in this respect. Had it been the pleasure of God, you might have been born of Pagans, in an heathen land; and, under the tuition of such parents, have been led to worship the most contemptible idols.

Bless God, and honour your parents; who, as the instruments of Providence, have brought you forth in a land of light and liberty, and taught you to worship the true God!—It is likewise the indispensable duty of professed Christians, *to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* † And if, through indulgence, sloth, negligence, or unfaithfulness, their children, and those under their care, remain ignorant and prophane, they will certainly be par-takes

† Eph. vi. 4

takers of their guilt, and perhaps become accessory to their ruin, both here and hereafter. Oh, that Christian parents would seriously consider these things!

It should, however, be always remembered, that education is not grace: the former may be enjoyed, where the latter is not at all experienced. Nor is it in the power of the best of parents, to give grace to their children. No; nor should salvation be expected from the best education. Regeneration and salvation, *are not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* *

(2) An *outward reformation*, from a vicious and prophane course of life, is also a great thing in the account of many; on which, it is to be feared, they lay much stress for salvation.

And it is certainly right, and of the utmost importance, that wicked persons should reform their conduct. They should abstain from swearing, lying, drunkenness, sabbath-breaking, uncleanness, and similar offences; since the holy scriptures positively declare, that such as live in the practice of those vices, *shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*† No; unless persons turn from, and hate such notorious vices, they must take up their everlasting abode in a lake of fire and brimstone. *For the wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God.*‡ O, sinners, beware of continuing

* John i. 13.

† 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

‡ Psal. ix. 17.

ning in any of those vices, lest an holy God should cut you off with a stroke! But observe, that an outward reformation, though absolutely necessary, gives no person a title to salvation. No; unless the *heart* be renewed and changed, and the person be *born of water and of the spirit*, the lip of truth hath solemnly declared, *he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* *

3. Man's *free will*, and *inherent power* to perform certain *conditions of salvation*, are very great things with some persons. These men think they can repent, believe, and turn to God whenever they please: and under the influence of these notions, there is reason to fear, thousands have gratified their lusts, and continued in sin, to their eternal destruction. However, if men can repent, believe, and turn to God when they please, and yet do not; their *guilt* must be greatly aggravated by the neglect. But Paul was not of their mind: his language is, *We are not sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God:* † and when he bids the Philippians to *work out their salvation*, he tells them for their encouragement, that *it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* ‡

As to *conditions of salvation*, I confess I know of none, properly speaking, but what devolved upon Christ as the sinner's surety,

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in

* John iii. 5. † 2 Cor. iii. 5. ‡ Phil ii. 12, 13.

10 *The Hills and Mountains laid low,*

in the everlasting covenant of grace. Th
covenant, respecting our salvation, was not
made *with us*, but with the Lord Jesus Christ,
as mediator. As in Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. *I have
made a covenant with my chosen; I have
sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will
I establish for ever, and build up thy throne
to all generations.* That is, on his fulfilling
the *conditions* of our salvation; which none
but Christ was able to perform: which lay,
in a perfect obedience to all the requirements
of the divine law, in our stead; in making
full satisfaction to divine justice, for all our
offences; and, in his pleading the infinite
efficacy of his own righteousness and blood,
before the throne above on our behalf. These
were the conditions of our salvation; and
these, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the sinner's
surety, has actually fulfilled.

4. *Human learning* is a thing of great
repute, in the judgment of many persons;
and what they seem to think, contributes
much towards teaching men the way of sal-
vation. This may be very useful, if sanctified;
and especially in *defending* the truths of the
gospel against its learned and subtle enemies.
But it never did, nor ever can, lead any man
to the saving knowledge of Christ, or to the
way of salvation by him.

Did the learned Scribes and Pharisees ob-
tain the knowledge of Christ, and the way of
salvation, by it? Nothing ~~like~~ so. Did Saul the
persecutor find the knowledge of salvation

by all his learning? By no means. We are told, notwithstanding his learning, that he *breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Jesus.** Or did the heathen philosophers, by all their study and literature, comprehend the mysteries of the cross of Christ? Hear the apostle's answer to this: *We preach Christ crucified; to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.†* And again, says the same inspired writer; *We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* He adds, *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, by all the advantages of human learning, because they are spiritually discerned.‡* Which exactly agrees with our Lord's own words, John vi. 45. *It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God: Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

5. Some think it a great thing, that they belong to this, or the other particular *sect* or *party* of professed Christians. Hence they are ready to cry, *Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, there he is.* Or, they adopt the language of those

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who

* Acts ix. 1. † 1 Cor. ii. 23. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. 12, 13, 14.

who said, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are we.* I consider myself as no party-man. I wish to love all good men, of every party and denomination of professed Christians; though they may differ from me, in some comparatively small points of faith, or modes of worship. Yet I am no friend to unsteadiness. No; it gives me great pleasure to find Christians established in the faith, and constant in their places of worship; both in the house of God, and in their families. It is an additional pleasure to me, to find God's children of every denomination, behaving in a friendly manner towards each other; and heartily uniting in the suppression of vice, and in promoting the honour of God in the world. Yet I would not conceal or deny what I believe to be the truth, no not to please any man. *For if I seek to please men, I am not the servant of Christ.** But, be we of what name or party of Christians we may, unless Christ be formed in us, and we make him our only foundation, love him unfeignedly, cheerfully obey him as king in Zion, and love each other for his sake; we cannot be right, nor will he acknowledge us at last, as his disciples.—I add,

6. That good works are very great things in the esteem of many persons; by the performance of which, they hope, through Christ, (as the common phrase is) to obtain the

the favour of God, and eternal happiness. I readily grant, that good work are great and good things; and that all believers should, as the apostle says, *Be careful to maintain them for necessary uses.* Titus iii. 14. But then it may be asked, What are those *uses*, which good works are designed for, and for which they should be carefully maintained? I answer; Not to gain the favour of God; this existed from everlasting; * is bestowed freely in time; † is the cause of our love to Christ, and of all good works. ‡ Nor do good works justify us before God: for we are *justified freely by his grace.* Nor do they obtain salvation for us: This is the *gift of God*, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. ult. Yes, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.* He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Rom. x. 4. Isa. liii. 5. It appears, then, that good works do not obtain the favour of God; that they do not justify us before God; and that they do not give us a title to eternal life.

Is it asked, What then are the *uses* of good works? I answer, They are to justify our faith before men: agreeable to those words, *Shew*

* Jer. iii. 31.

† 1 Ep. John iv. 19.

‡ Hos. xiv. 4.

2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. They are to evidence our love to the Lord Jesus Christ. If ye love me, keep my commandments. —He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. They are to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. You see, then, my friends, there are important uses for good works, without making a favour of them.—We proceed now,

II. To shew whence salvation is to be hoped for, and where it only can be had. It is to be had in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and in him only. For truly in the LORD our GOD is the salvation of Israel. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Neither is there salvation in ANY OTHER: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.†—Here, then, we may enquire, what, of the Lord Jesus Christ, persons may hope for salvation from. This greatest of all blessings may be expected,*

1. From the dignity of his person. The Lord Jesus Christ is a person, a most glorious person. Not an human person, and a divine person: for then there would be two persons in him; which is too absurd to be admitted: the human nature of Christ never existing, but in union with the person of the Son of God.

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

† Acts iv. 12.

God. But Christ is one person, possessed of two natures; being truly God, and truly man: *IMMANUEL, GOD with us.* * Of whom it is said, *In his name shall the Gentiles trust.* † That is, in his person: for trusting in a mere name, can save no man. But, *whoso putteth his trust in the LORD, shall be safe.* ‡ Nor is Christ to be trusted in, as a mere man. For, *curSED is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.* But *blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.* § And again, *Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.* || In Christ, therefore, may poor sinners hope for salvation; even in *GOD manifest in the flesh; who is, over all, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER. Amen.* **

2. Salvation may be hoped for, from the complete righteousness of Christ. We cannot stand before an infinitely holy God, without a perfect righteousness. This we have not in ourselves: for all our righteousnesses (negative, positive, moral and evangelical) are as filthy rags. †† How, then, can we think of being justified by them, in the sight of an infinitely righteous God! It is impossible: neither his holiness, nor his justice, can admit of it. But, for ever adored be his sacred name,

* Matt. i. 21, &c. † Chap. xii. 21. ‡ Prov. xxix. 25.
§ Jer. xvii. 5, and 7. || Isa. xxvi. 4. ** Rom. ix. 5.
†† Isa. lxiv. 6.

name, the Son of God himself hath wrought out, and brought in, an everlasting and spotless righteousness to clothe our naked souls, and justify us before God. Just such a righteousness as the law and justice of God required of us; without which, we cannot stand with acceptance in God's presence. A righteousness, consisting in the holiness of Christ's human nature, his perfect obedience to all the requirements of the moral law, and his painful, shameful sufferings on the cross, for us wretched sinners! Thus was the Son of God himself *made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.** Amazing love! stupendous wisdom! and astonishing condescension!

Listen, O sinner, to the language of this almighty and compassionate Saviour. *Hearken unto ME, ye stout-hearted that are far from righteousness. I bring near my righteousness: It shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.*† Happy they that know this joyful sound! *They shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.*‡ Earnestly pray, my friends, that you may be enabled to rest by faith upon this righteousness, as Abraham did, to whom it was imputed; and for our encouragement,
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* 2 Cor. v. 21. † Isa. xlv. 12, 13. ‡ Psal. lxxxix. 15, 16

the apostle tells us, *It was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.**

3. Salvation may be hoped for, by the vilest of sinners, from the *infinite efficacy* of Christ's most precious blood. We want, not only a righteousness to clothe us; but, likewise, *blood* to cleanse us, to bring peace into our consciences, or to remove slavish fears of the wrath of God. We are both guilty and filthy: we have incurred the just displeasure of God, by our enormous crimes: nor was it possible for us to be pardoned, purified, and comforted, without full satisfaction being made to divine justice for all our aggravated offences. Our guilt was *infinite*, in reference to the object against whom we sinned: and, therefore, entirely out of the power of any finite being to make satisfaction for it. *For the redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.†*

But, behold, the Son of God himself condescends to pay the debt! He became responsible for our crimes, and made full satisfaction for them, at the expence of his own life. Yes, *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him.*
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and

* Rom. iv. 22, 23, 24, and 25. † Psal. xlix. 8.

*and with his stripes we are healed.** And what was it, my friends, that gave such efficacy to the sacrifice of Christ, as to make it meritorious for our redemption and eternal salvation? Was it not the union subsisting between the divine person of the Son of God, and the human nature? Was it not this to which the apostle had reference, when he said to the elders at *Ephesus*; *Feed the church of GOD, which HE hath purchased with his own blood?* † Had not another apostle the same thing in view, when he said; *Hereby perceive we the love of GOD, because HE laid down his life for us.* ‡ Yes, it is the proper Deity of Christ, that gives an infinite efficacy to his human sacrifice. If we deny this, we not only detract from the dignity of his person, but make his sacrifice utterly ineffectual to our redemption. For, if Christ be not truly and properly GOD, his blood can be no more to us than the blood of a martyr.

Think then, my friends, of the dignity of Christ's person; the greatness of his love to poor sinners, and the infinite worth of his precious blood. Does sin trouble you? Look to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel. Look to, and rely upon, the infinite efficacy of Christ's blood, and you are safe for ever. For, the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin. ||

4. Salvation

* Isa. liii. 5.

† Acts xx. 28.

‡ 1 Ep. John-iii, 16.

|| 1 Ep. John i. 7.

4. Salvation may be hoped for, from the intercession of Christ. For, *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins.** Though he is exalted to the highest dignity, and possessed of ineffable glory; yet he still remembers his people in their present militant state. He knows their sorrows; he sees their afflictions; he hears their groans; and he takes an account of all their tears. Yes, and he marks the conduct of all their enemies; restrains their power, and intercedes for his disciples, with his Father and their's. Hence they receive constant supplies of grace and strength from his fullness; by which they are enabled to resist temptations, to curb their corruptions, and to live by faith upon Jesus as their great high priest above. Expecting, not only help from him to do the will of God here on earth; but, likewise, the full accomplishment of his intercessory prayer, recorded John xvii. 24. *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory.*

And though the Christian's very best services are attended with much weakness and imperfection, yet this should comfort him: His great high priest above, takes them all into his hand, sprinkles them with his blood, and presents them in his name to the Father.

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Thus

* 1 Ep. John ii. 1, 2.

Thus they become acceptable and well pleasing to God through him.*—Once more:

5. Salvation may be hoped for, from the person, office, and work of *the Spirit of Christ*. Without the divine Spirit's agency and operations, there can be no salvation. Unless he apply the blessings of grace, work faith in us, and help us to appropriate what Christ has done and suffered for us, we cannot be happy, either here or hereafter. *For, to be carnally minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you.†*

Now the Spirit of Christ is a *person* and not a *property* in the divine nature, as some do erroneously conceive. This appears from the personal pronoun *HE*, which our Lord applies to him, no less than six times in one verse, John xvi. 13. Also, his being *sent* by the Father, and by the Son, cannot, with any propriety, be said of any thing but a person.

And

* Rev. viii. 3, 4.

† Rom. viii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

And this likewise shews him to be a *distinct* person, both from the Father, and the Son; he being sent by them both. For it must be very absurd to say, That a person *sent himself*. And yet this must be the case, if there be but *one* person in the godhead.

And that the Holy Ghost is God, appears evident from Acts v. 3, 4. In the 3d verse, Peter says, *Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the HOLY GHOST?* And in verse the 4th he says to him, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto GOD.* It appears, then, that the Holy Ghost is a person, a distinct person, and that he is truly and properly God. And, as I said before, without his influence upon our souls, we cannot discern the beauty of Christ; we cannot enjoy any communion with God here; nor can we have any meetness for the kingdom above.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to each of us, to be *experimentally* acquainted with the Spirit's work. It is he, that convinces men of the evil nature of sin; * that regenerates, and sanctifies them; † and it is his office and work, *to reveal Christ to the sensible sinner's heart*, to enable him to believe in him, and to shed abroad the love of God there. ‡ Yes, and it is he that endites the saints' prayers, and helps their infirmities. § He likewise strengthens and comforts them,
under

* John xvi. 8.

† Chap. iii. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. xii. 3.

Rom. v. 5.

§ Rom. viii. 26, 27.

under all their afflictions, trials, and temptations;* witnesses their adoption, and seals them to the day of redemption.†—Earnestly pray, my brethren, for this blessed Spirit, to sanctify your souls. Jesus himself gives you the greatest encouragement so to do; saying, *If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*‡ And, if the Lord has been pleased to bestow this blessing upon you; if he has given you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ; the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind; be thankful, admire his distinguishing grace, and take heed that you grieve not this Holy Spirit of God. §

Beware of sin, even of the most secret sins: for, *If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us.*|| Take heed also of an inordinate love to the things of this world; For *if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*¶ He cannot, whilst this is his unhappy case, have any comfortable sense, or enjoyment of the Father's love. May the Lord help each of us, to watch against the cares, the fears, the frowns, and the smiles of the world! Be diligent likewise, in all the appointed means of grace. Read the holy scriptures daily, and let

* Eph. iii. 16.

† Gal. iv. 5, 6.

‡ Luke xi. 13.

§ Eph. iv. 30.

|| Psal. lxxvi. 18.

¶ 1 John ii. 15.

let the Lord's day be strictly observed and kept holy by you and your's. Miss no opportunities of hearing the gospel of Christ. Be much in prayer, in the closet, and in the family: and be careful to attend prayer-meetings. This will be *minding the things of the Spirit*, as Paul exhorts; and through a divine blessing, tend to unite your hearts to Christ, and to each other in love; and to build you up together, as an habitation for God through the Spirit. *

I shall now conclude with a few remarks, by way of improvement. Hence, then, we learn, *What vast obstructions lie in the way of a sinner's salvation; and what a miracle of mercy it is, that one soul should get safe to eternal glory.* A multitude of hills and mountains lie in the way. Yes, there are not only mountains of ignorance, and of superstition; but likewise, of *pride*, of *unbelief*, of *self-conceit*, and of *self-righteousness*: all which must be laid low, before the sinner can see any beauty in Christ, or know any thing of the way of salvation. And who is able to remove these obstacles, or to bring down these high mountains? Not the sinner himself: he has neither will nor power to do it. Nor is it in the power of any mere creature whatever. None but He, whose arm is omnipotent, and whose grace is boundless. He only, *who measures the waters in the hollow*
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of his hand, weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, is equal to this important work. He who says to the winds and seas, Peace, be still; and they obey him: † He can lay all these towering mountains low. Therefore, let no sinner despair of salvation: only look to, and rest upon Jesus by faith, and all these mountains shall become a plain. Who art thou, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel? thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the head stone with shoutings, crying, GRACE, GRACE unto it! Zech. iv. 7.*

Again: What an empty thing a profession of religion is, without a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus! Alas, my friends! if we had all the learning and knowledge in the world, it would leave us miserable at last, if destitute of an experimental acquaintance with Christ. This, says our blessed Lord, is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. ‡ Know him, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, whose office it is, to take of the things of Christ, and shew them in all their beauty, to the children of God. || All other knowledge, as the apostle says, puffeth up: but this edifies. It empties us of self-importance, and lays us in the dust before God. It teaches us self-denial, and makes us willing to be any thing, that Christ may be all in all.

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* Isa. xl. 12.

† Mark iv. 39.

‡ John xvii. 3.

|| John xvi. 14.

It will make us love Christ, and every thing that belongs to him. To love his word, his worship, and all his people, for his sake.—Whereas a mere *notional* knowledge of Christ, and of the holy scriptures, only makes persons self-important, contentious, lifeless, and formal under a profession of religion. Take heed, therefore, of resting in mere *notions*; or in a bare *form* of religion, without an experience of it's life, power, and sweetness to your souls. Pray that you may know the preciousness of Christ: live upon him by faith, and act daily under the constraining power of his love.

Further: Hence it appears, *that such as are taught by the Spirit, and know the glory and preciousness of Christ, should make it their concern to exalt, and commend him to others.* Too many, it is to be feared, make it their study to eclipse his glory, and lessen his dignity, in the esteem of men. Do you therefore, who are his real friends, make it your business to exalt and commend him. Tell poor sinners plainly, *who he is, and what he is.* Tell them, that he is the Son of the living God; his own proper Son. That he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. That he is the true God, the mighty God, yea, the Almighty: * and therefore, a sure foundation to build their faith and hope upon; able and

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* Rev. i. 7, 8.

willing to save to the very uttermost, *all that come unto God by him.**

Tell them also of his sufferings and death. How chearfully he engaged in the work of our salvation. That he readily bore the ponderous load of our guilt, and submitted to the painful death of the cross, to satisfy divine justice for our crimes, and to deliver from eternal misery, the vilest of the human race.—Tell them, likewise, of the infinite efficacy of the Saviour's blood: That it is the blood of him, who is truly God, as well as really Man; and, therefore, infinitely efficacious. Though their sins be ever so many, or ever so great; yet, the efficacy of Christ's blood exceeds them all. Do not forget to inform poor sinners of the greatnels, the freeness, the unchangeableness, and the sweetness of Christ's love, as manifested and revealed to the heart. You know, by happy experience, that it is sweeter than honey, or the honey-comb: and who can tell, but that it may be the pleasure of God, whilst you are commending Christ's love to others, to make you the happy instruments of conveying the knowledge and sweetness of it to their souls?

Once more: We may justly infer, from what has been said, *the eternal salvation of the weakest believers in Christ.* Afflictions, temptations, and persecutions, they may expect to meet with in the world; as they most certainly will, in a greater or less degree.

But,

* Heb. vii. 25.

John vi. 37.

But, fear not, ye feeble followers of Christ. Jesus gathers the lambs with his arm, and carries them in his bosom.* You feel your weakness, and are afraid of falling: that is your very great mercy. But remember it is written, *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.*† Jesus himself assures you, that it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of those little ones that believe in him should perish.‡

If Jesus be truly God; if he have loved you, and given himself for you; if his blood be infinitely efficacious; and if He himself have engaged to keep and save you; then who, or what, shall separate you from his love; or pluck you out of his hands? *I am persuaded*, says Paul, *that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Only let it be your constant care to live dependant upon him, to be obedient to him, and to walk humbly before him. This is the way to manifest your love to him, to evidence your interest in him, to enjoy communion with him, and to glorify his name in the world: And when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Amen.

* Isa. xl. 11.

† Ver. 29.

‡ Matt. xviii. 14.

A N

H Y M N

I.

“**D**EAREST of all the names above,
 My Jesus and my God!
 Who can resist thy heavenly love,
 Or trifle with thy blood?”

II.

’Tis by the merits of thy death,
 The Father smiles again;
 ’Tis by thine interceding breath,
 The Spirit dwells with men.

III.

Till God in human flesh I see,
 My thoughts no comfort find;
 The holy, just, and sacred Three,
 Are terrors to my mind.

IV.

But if IMMANUEL’s face appear,
 My hope, my joy begins:
 His name forbids my slavish fear,
 His grace removes my sins.

V.

While Jews on their own law rely,
 And Greeks of wisdom boast;
 I love th’ incarnate Mystery,
 And there I fix my trust.”

WATTS.

THE END.

